

The Mayflower Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 114747 |
| Local Authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 357606 |
| Inspection dates | 30 November 2010–1 December 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Mary Summers |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|--|----------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 316 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Robert Macaulay |
| Headteacher | Steven Springett |
| Date of previous school inspection | 7 November 2007 |
| School address | Main Road Harwich CO12 4AJ |
| Telephone number | 01255 502444 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 18 lessons and 13 teachers. They met with a governor, members of staff and pupils, looked at a range of school policies and plans, records of pupils' progress, and analysed questionnaires returned by staff and pupils and the 105 questionnaires submitted by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The levels of challenge provided for more able pupils to enable them to make good progress.
- Boys' achievement in lessons.
- How well the school supports pupils who transfer into school mid-way through the year.
- How effectively community cohesion is promoted by senior leaders, including the governing body.

Information about the school

The Mayflower is larger than most primary schools. Pupils who attend come from a wide area. Most are from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportions identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and statements of special educational needs have grown significantly in recent years and are well above average. Many of these pupils have emotional or behavioural difficulties. The school has won a number of awards in recent years, including the Eco Schools award and Healthy Schools status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The Mayflower is a satisfactory school. There is a productive working ethos and a good commitment towards making learning enjoyable for pupils. Pupils' attainment is broadly average and their achievement satisfactory. Following a sharp dip in pupils' attainment in Year 6 in 2010, senior leaders have taken prompt action to focus on improving basic skills, especially in writing and mathematics. Teaching, while satisfactory at present, is improving rapidly. Teachers have positive relationships with pupils, resulting in a calm and pleasant atmosphere in classrooms. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are appropriately supported in lessons through modified activities and through the effective support provided by teaching assistants. This support enables them to make the same satisfactory levels of progress as others. However, more able pupils are not always challenged enough by the activities and their progress is, therefore, sometimes relatively slower than others.

Pupils' behaviour is good and makes a positive contribution to their learning in lessons. They work and play well together, help one another if needed and value each others' successes. They enjoy learning, as their good levels of participation in lessons shows. Attendance has been low in recent years and punctuality weak. The school has more work to do in stressing the importance of regular and punctual attendance to pupils, parents and carers and in monitoring absences more rigorously so that patterns can be identified and prompt action taken.

Assessment systems have been strengthened to ensure that pupils who show signs of underachievement are identified quickly. Senior staff are working closely with teachers to help them interpret assessment information more effectively so that they can plan lessons which meet the different needs of pupils, especially those who are more able.

There has been satisfactory improvement to the school's work and performance since the last inspection. The school is presently strengthening its procedures to meet the needs of the large and growing number of pupils transferring into school mid-way through the year, many of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Senior staff have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, although are sometimes too generous in their evaluations of some aspects of its work. This is because monitoring and evaluation procedures are not always rigorous enough to check the impact of plans, policies and curriculum innovations and interventions on pupils' well being, progress and development. Improvement plans do not contain clear and measureable goals, along with interim benchmarks with which to judge progress towards them. Nonetheless, school leaders show a good commitment towards future improvement and this, together with strong support from the whole school community, show the school to have a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve in the future.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By end of the summer term 2011, raise the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 and Level 5 in the national tests and assessments by ensuring that activities in lessons provide enough challenge for more able pupils.
- By the end of the summer term 2011, raise attendance and improve punctuality by:
 - monitoring absence more carefully to identify patterns and taking swift action to address concerns
 - raising the profile of attendance and punctuality throughout the school
 - working closely with parents to address attendance and punctuality issues.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that interventions and innovations to the curriculum are evaluated to check their impact on pupils' progress;
 - evaluate policies and plans more regularly and rigorously to check they are working successfully and identify where improvements are needed;
 - ensuring that improvement plans contain clear, measureable success criteria and interim benchmarks to check progress towards them.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children's skills vary considerably when they start in Reception. They are broadly typical for their age in many aspects of their development, although skills in communication, language and literacy are often lower than expected for their age.

Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and achievement is satisfactory overall. Boys' progress is similar to that of girls. Both girls and boys participate well in lessons, especially when the activities are fun. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson for example, pupils played a counting game which involved counting in twos. Boys were especially excited by the game and could be seen anticipating their turn with great enthusiasm, working out their responses well in advance so that they didn't have to 'sit out'.

The school's concerted focus on spelling, handwriting and basic number skills is showing a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. Their books show pupils keenly responding to teachers' useful marking comments and working hard to achieve their individual targets.

Pupils apply themselves well in lessons. They work successfully individually, in pairs and in small groups. In an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson in the computer suite, Year 3 and 4 pupils worked hard to combine their written work with pictures to add interest to their work about Advent. With effective support from the teacher and the assistant, the pupils completed the task successfully. More able pupils often waste time completing tasks which are too easy and do not help them move to higher levels. Pupils in an upper mathematics set, for example, worked at activities which

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were pitched at a similar level to the lower set, and made limited progress during the lesson.

Through the work done to gain Healthy Schools status, pupils learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles and most adopt them. They make a very good contribution to the school community through their work as school councillors and playground leaders. They are active in the local community, singing to elderly residents and performing concerts for parents, carers and friends. Spiritual and cultural development, while satisfactory, are not as strong as pupils' social and moral development and the school is presently increasing the range of opportunities for pupils to learn about cultures and communities other than their own. Pupils' good behaviour, high levels of confidence and broadly average attainment means they are appropriately prepared for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 3 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 4 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of experiences to make learning enjoyable for pupils. It contributes especially well to the development of their personal and social skills. Pupils particularly appreciate the wide range of clubs and activities on offer after school, especially those that involve sport and music. Opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects are increasing. For example, Year 2 pupils evaluated the model houses they built in a design and technology lesson, writing about how they made them and how they could be improved. The school has recently reviewed

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the curriculum to make it more relevant and interesting but it does not yet fully ensure progression in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.

Although teaching remains satisfactory overall, there are clear signs that it is improving and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. Teachers are using interactive whiteboards as a tool to make lessons more stimulating and to explain and illustrate teaching points. Teachers question pupils well to assess their learning and to extend their thinking and understanding. Work carried out in small groups with teaching assistants is often very beneficial in helping pupils practise skills that they are finding difficult. Pupils' learning is sometimes hindered when tasks are too easy and fail to challenge them sufficiently. They occasionally lose concentration and become restless when teaching lacks variety and involves them listening to the teacher for long periods of time.

Pupils receive appropriate levels of support and advice, which make them feel comfortable about school. Pupils are well supervised at break and lunchtimes and equipment is checked carefully to ensure its safety. Pupils who start at the Mayflower mid-way through the year receive a warm welcome from adults and pupils alike so that they settle in quickly and begin to play a full part in school life. Procedures to assess and meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are satisfactory and are improving as the new coordinator addresses areas which are less robust, for example, individual education plans and target setting. Currently a wide range of interventions are in place to support pupils at risk of underachievement but these are not monitored carefully enough or evaluated to check the impact on pupils' progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 3 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 3 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 3 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher drives the school's work satisfactorily and shares his vision effectively with staff. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher who takes an active role in supporting and developing staff expertise. The quality of teaching is monitored regularly and senior leaders are improving their skills in this, which is enabling them to provide clearer feedback to teachers about how to improve their performance further.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. There is a strong sense of community within the school and locality and links with communities further afield are developing to ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of life in communities outside their own experience. The governing body provides satisfactory support to the school's work. Many governors are new and are still finding out about their roles and responsibilities. They bring a sound range of skills in, for example, finance and education

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with which to help the school. The chair has a clear view of the developments needed to ensure that governors have a thorough view of the school's performance so that they are able to take a more active role in self-evaluation procedures.

There are clear procedures to ensure that pupils are safe in school. Safeguarding policies are satisfactory. Staff are trained regularly in safeguarding and new staff checked carefully to ensure their suitability. Staff promote equality of opportunity satisfactorily, checking carefully to see whether pupils, whatever their background or needs, make enough progress. This has revealed that more able pupils do not make sufficient progress because of a lack of challenge in some lessons. Racist incidents or any form of discrimination are rare, but procedures are in place to ensure that any which arise are tackled promptly.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 3 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 3 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly and develop their self-confidence. Parents and carers appreciate the warm welcome given to their children and adults' efforts to make them feel safe and happy. The children come into school confidently each morning, keen to participate in all the activities that are organised for them. There is a good balance of adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves.

Children start school at broadly typical levels for their age except in communication, language and literacy which are often below expectations. Most children reach the levels expected of them in all the different areas of their learning. They develop secure personal and social skills, showing great resilience when working out 'half of' a given number of objects. They participated well in activities in the outdoor area, delivering 'parcels' and 'directing traffic'. Many develop a secure knowledge of letters and sounds, although a sizeable proportion are less confident in these skills when they transfer to Year 1. This is

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because the information gained through ongoing assessment is not collated or analysed well enough to identify gaps in children's skills, knowledge and understanding and swift action taken to address these. Insufficient use is made of the information to identify more able pupils and provide activities to challenge them at higher levels and also to identify where provision might be strengthened to improve children's achievement generally.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Careful attention is paid to ensuring that children are safe and secure and that resources are in good condition and are used effectively to promote learning. However, records, policies and plans are not easily accessible and monitored regularly enough to ensure their effectiveness. Plans for improvement lack clear goals and are only moderately successful in driving this aspect of the school's work forward.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are positive about the school's work. Most agree that their children enjoy school, that their children's needs are met effectively and that the school helps their children to adopt healthy lifestyles. These positive views were supported by evidence from this inspection. A few parents and carers think that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively. These views were not supported by inspection evidence taken from observations of lessons in every class, discussions with pupils and the examination of the school's systems for managing behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Mayflower Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 105 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 316 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 65 | 62 | 39 | 37 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 60 | 57 | 38 | 36 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 57 | 54 | 42 | 40 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 53 | 50 | 45 | 43 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 58 | 55 | 45 | 43 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 53 | 50 | 48 | 46 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 53 | 50 | 48 | 46 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 47 | 45 | 48 | 46 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 45 | 43 | 55 | 52 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 41 | 39 | 46 | 44 | 13 | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 39 | 37 | 49 | 47 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 47 | 45 | 46 | 44 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 52 | 50 | 48 | 46 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 58 | 36 | 4 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 43 | 40 | 9 |
| Secondary schools | 10 | 35 | 42 | 13 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 39 | 45 | 3 |
| Special schools | 33 | 42 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 18 | 40 | 29 | 12 |
| All schools | 11 | 42 | 38 | 9 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Mayflower Primary School, Harwich, CO12 4AJ

Thank you so much for welcoming us recently and telling us your opinions about your school. Your views, along with everything else that we saw, helped us to form a clear view about how well your school works. You go to a school that is giving you a satisfactory education and these are some of the important things we found out about it.

All the adults take care of you and keep you safe in school.

You understand what it means to be healthy, and many of you enjoy the nutritious school lunches and take part in after-school sport.

You support and respect each other well.

Your behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.

You enjoy learning, especially when lessons are fun.

Although things are working well, there are a few things that could be even better. We have asked your teachers to make sure that lessons are set at the right levels and provide enough challenge to ensure you all make good progress. You also need to make sure that you attend school regularly so you do not miss important parts of your education. We have asked the people in charge to make sure that they plan more carefully to ensure that the school continues to improve and to keep a closer check on how well things are going so they can adjust the plans if they need to.

You can all play your part in helping your school to become even better by making sure you continue to work hard and do your best in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Mary Summers

Lead inspector

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